

## Portico

A common cliché in descriptions and analyses of globalization is that the nation-state has weakened under the pressure of large capital flows, the growing political and economic power of multinational corporations, and the reduction of the welfare state. However, this judgment is shown to be a hasty one if we look at specific political or economic processes occurring within national territories.

In this issue's first article, specialist Edit Antal shows us just how a specific process, like the production and consumption of and legislation about genetically modified organism in Canada and Mexico, spurs a series of political, social, and economic interactions set on the backdrop of economic globalization as fostered largely by multinational corporations. Although they take place on the national plane, it should be pointed out that the debates take many forms and unfold differently. The actors—different levels of government, scientists, the private sector, farmers, courts, consumers, and non-governmental organizations—participate in the public debate motivated by very different interests and commitments. Historic and local factors undoubtedly have a decisive influence on the course of the intricate relationships among science, society, and politics.

Héctor Cuadra's article deals with the extraordinary complexity of the processes arising out of the North American Free Trade Agreement. He establishes a link between NAFTA and social inequality in Mexico since the treaty presupposes equality among the signer countries. The unexpected, growing inequality in our country, undoubtedly at least partially a result of NAFTA, has caused intense migration, among other reasons, because Mexico's industries are oriented to export and not to domestic consumption, and tend to generate fewer jobs than those linked to the domestic market. Cuadra suggests that policies are needed to alleviate the economic disparity among the populations of the region's three countries so the potential benefits of the treaty can be more effective and the area can be competitive on the world market.

Migration is a recurring theme in our magazine and on this occasion, Rodrigo Parrini et al. and Martha García both present our readers with articles in the "Contem-

porary Issues” section showing how the migratory process can generate conflicts or assimilation. The authors compare two deployments of sexuality: the discourses used by organizations doing AIDS prevention work in California and another non-identity-based strategic discourse constructed by the migrants themselves in the United States. The article’s aim is to illustrate that both the NGOs and the migrants’ suppositions are made up of socio-cultural elements that do not necessarily coincide. Martha García describes a contrary movement by analyzing Nahua communities in southern Mexico which have recreated a symbolic universe in order to incorporate the migratory experience into the communities’ kinship and social networks.

This issue’s special contribution reviews some of the first international treaties the newly independent United States made with France, including the 1778 Treaty of Alliance, the 1783 Treaty of Paris and the treaty to concretize the 1803 Louisiana Purchase. It also includes the secret message that President Thomas Jefferson sent Congress about the Meriwether Lewis and William Clark expedition to Louisiana.

In this issue, José Luis Valdés-Ugalde interviews prestigious Harvard University scholar Joseph Nye, Jr., who offers his views about power and its distribution in different situations in today’s international context. He also sheds light on the issues of terrorism, national security, and national culture and the impact all these have on the problem of national identities.

Our final sections include contributions about the new understanding of bio-ethics, our country’s manufacturing sector’s foreign trade performance and Karl Popper’s liberal political philosophy.

As is our custom we finish the issue with a “Chronology” of the main national, bi-national and tri-national events in the region to offer our readers a useful tool for reflection and research.

Lastly, we would like to inform our readers that starting with this issue, the American University’s Center for North American Studies no longer participates in our journal. After deciding to withdraw for budget reasons, the center informed us of its decision in a timely manner.

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